



Houston **Bikeway** Program

# Bikeway News

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## City Meets Air Quality Commitment for Bikeways--Celebrates with Ribbon-cutting and bike ride

This past March, representatives from the City of Houston Bikeway Program and the Houston-Galveston Area Council, the local metropolitan planning organization, met at Reveille Park to cut the ribbon on 50 new miles of designated bikeways for Houston. These bike routes and shared lanes reach from Brays Bayou to Sims Bayou and from Old Galveston Road to Cullen.

The new bikeway completes the City of Houston's commitment to deliver 263 miles of designated bikeways to improve air quality under the State Implementation Plan.

The overall bikeway network increases the opportunities to use bicycling and walking as a way to get around, exercise and stay fit without adding pollution into our air. Ride a bike—make it count.



Photo by Gary Norman

*Ribbon-cutting at Reveille Park. (L to R) Lilibeth Andre, John Sakolosky, and Alan Clark.*

## Neighborhood Bike Rides

The City of Houston Bikeway Program held a neighborhood bike ride to celebrate the completion of the new designated bikeway in the southeast.

Neighbors joined John J. Sakolosky, Senior Assistant Director of the Public Works and Engineering Department; Alan Clark, Metropolitan Planning Organization Director of the Houston-Galveston Area Council; and Lilibeth André, Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordinator, on a

neighborhood bike ride that started at Reveille Park and ran along the new designated bikeway. Deborah January-Bevers, from the Quality of Life Coalition, also rode. John Soto, representative for Council Member

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Carol Alvarado's District I office, joined the festivities.

Bay Area Schwinn, a local bike shop, was there to do free bike checks and visit with the neighbors. The Houston Police Department Bike Patrol was also there to help and teach bike safety tips.

The new bikeway connects to more than eight city parks. The Sims Nature Center, located at 3997 River Drive, can be reached off the bikeway system and provides a fun destination point for cyclists and walkers. The bikeway also connects to Sims Bayou, a future bayou trail.

After the ride, we packed our things and got ready to go. Several of our young neighbors rode by. One called out, "Are you coming back next week?"

He was hooked.

## Organize A Ride

People want to spend time relaxing in their neighborhoods. One of the best ways to enjoy your neighborhood is with a neighborhood bike ride. Organize a neighborhood bike ride. It's habit forming. Ride your bike to the store, the park, the trails or school. Visit the library, the museum, or ride to work. Neighborhood bike rides can give you an opportunity to reacquaint yourself with your bike and your neighbors. It's a good way to get around the neighborhood.



Photo by Gary Norman

*Riders of all ages get ready for the neighborhood bike ride at Reville Park, along the designated bikeway at DeLeon.*

### Ready to Ride? Consider these items:

- Helmet
- Bell (or Horn)
- Mirror
- Headlight
- Lock
- Wheel Reflectors (2)
- Fenders
- Pedal Reflectors
- Sunscreen
- Saddlebags or Rear Rack
- Tight Seat and Handle Bars
- Tail Light
- Bright/White Clothing
- Water Bottle
- Brakes

## Bikeway Video

A partnership between the City of Houston Bikeway Program and Houston Community College (HCC) School of Broadcast Technology has resulted in the development of a bikeway program overview video aimed at promoting bicycle safety and increasing awareness of the Houston bikeway network.

With the support of Marcelo Gonzalez, HCC Department Chair, the Houston Bikeway Program presented students with the challenge of developing an education tool while giving them the opportunity to work on a community project that was fun and valuable to Houstonians.

The video provides a brief description of the Houston Bikeway Program, the bikeway network and important program projects. It can currently be seen on the Municipal Channel and is also featured in the interactive bikeway presentation. Additionally, plans are in the works for it to be accessible on the Bikeway Program Web site.

The Houston Bikeway Program appreciates the tireless efforts as well as the endless creative and fresh approach of Mr. Gonzalez and the ten students who participated in script development and video shooting across the city. We look forward to future projects that will continue to bring valuable education tools to area residents.



## NOTE:

### Bikeway Change

The W. Alabama bikeway has been relocated to Fairview. The new designated bikeway provides a shared bike route along Ella Lee, from Wesleyan to Bellmeade. It then turns on Bellmeade to Avalon, where it crosses Kirby at the traffic light. The trail continues on Avalon to Dickey Place and then back to Fairview and on to Commonwealth. There it connects to the existing segment that leads to Hyde Park, McGowen, and into downtown.

For more information visit our web site at [www.houstonbikeways.org](http://www.houstonbikeways.org)

## Neighborhood Bike Ride Tips

When organizing a neighborhood bike ride, visit your area bike shop. They are bike pros, know the area well, and can help you find a good route.

Visit [www.houstonbikeways.org](http://www.houstonbikeways.org) to find the bikeway network map and identify bikeways near you. Mark points of interest (parks, museums, libraries) along your chosen route.

1. Check bikes: tires, brakes, handlebars & chain
2. Make sure everyone wears a helmet
3. Bring water bottles and sunscreen
4. Obey traffic rules and ride courteously-safety first!

No permit is required for a casual ride. If you plan to have a high number of riders, call your local police station so they know you'll be out riding.



## What's A Bikeway?

A bikeway is a designated path for bicycle travel. There are two kinds of paths: on-street and off-street.

We have three types of on-street bikeways: bike lanes, bike routes, and shared lanes.



Bike lanes are designated, striped bicycle lanes with special pavement markings and signs along the road. They are generally found to the right of the traffic lane and can be used only by bicycles.



Bike routes are designated, wide bike and motor vehicle lanes. Cars and

bicycles ride side-by-side using this lane. Bike routes are generally found to the right of the traffic lane. Parking may be allowed on this route and cyclists will ride to the left and around the parked car.



Shared lanes are designated for bicycle OR motor vehicle use. The shared lane is not for simultaneous use of both vehicles because it is not as wide as the bike route. Vehicles traveling at a greater speed can pass other slow moving vehicles using the left lane, if road conditions allow. There are special pavement markings and signs along this lane to remind both motorists and cyclists



they are traveling on shared lanes.



Bike trails are off-street, designated multi-use paths. They can be park trails, bayou trails, or rails-to-trails (converted railroads). Courtesy

is important and pedestrians have the right-of-way. Verbal signals are recommended to allow fellow users to travel safely on the same path.

Keep in mind that bicycles are considered vehicles whether traveling on designated bikeways or not. Common courtesy and obeying traffic rules is key to the safety of all road users, especially where motor-vehicles interact with bike riders. Therefore, cyclists have the right to use the road and must obey all traffic rules.

## Bikeway Planning and GIS

A partnership with Texas Southern University and Houston Community College is assisting the Houston Bikeway Program in the development of a network planning project using a geographic information system (GIS) as a planning tool.

Through a pilot program, two part-time student interns are assisting bikeway staff in developing project concepts. They are obtaining hands-on experience and receiving credit for their participation in the internship program and will have an opportunity to build on their school education and experience by working in a professional environment.

"It gives me the opportunity to work on real projects that benefit the community," said Zhengnian Song, from Texas Southern University, referring to his transportation planning projects. "I can gain work experience this way."

The project is creating forecasting and analysis tools that will help the Bikeway Program identify, study and plan logical extensions and connectors to the existing bikeway network.

With the planning tools in place, the Houston Bikeway Program will prepare a plan to improve the Bikeway Program's planning and development of new projects.

You can participate by attending the superneighborhood meetings in your area. Share your interest in



Photo design by L. Andre

*Student interns Zhengnian Song, from Texas Southern University, and Laura Fessler, from Houston Community College.*

bikeways for your community and help identify logical bikeways for you and your neighbors.

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